

Gingrich Rails Against Media 'Socialists'

Speaker Offers Advice On Buying Advertising

By Howard Kurtz and Ann Devroy
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House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) told corporate executives Monday night that many newspaper editorial boards contain "socialists" and that their companies should reconsider whether to advertise in papers that oppose their views.

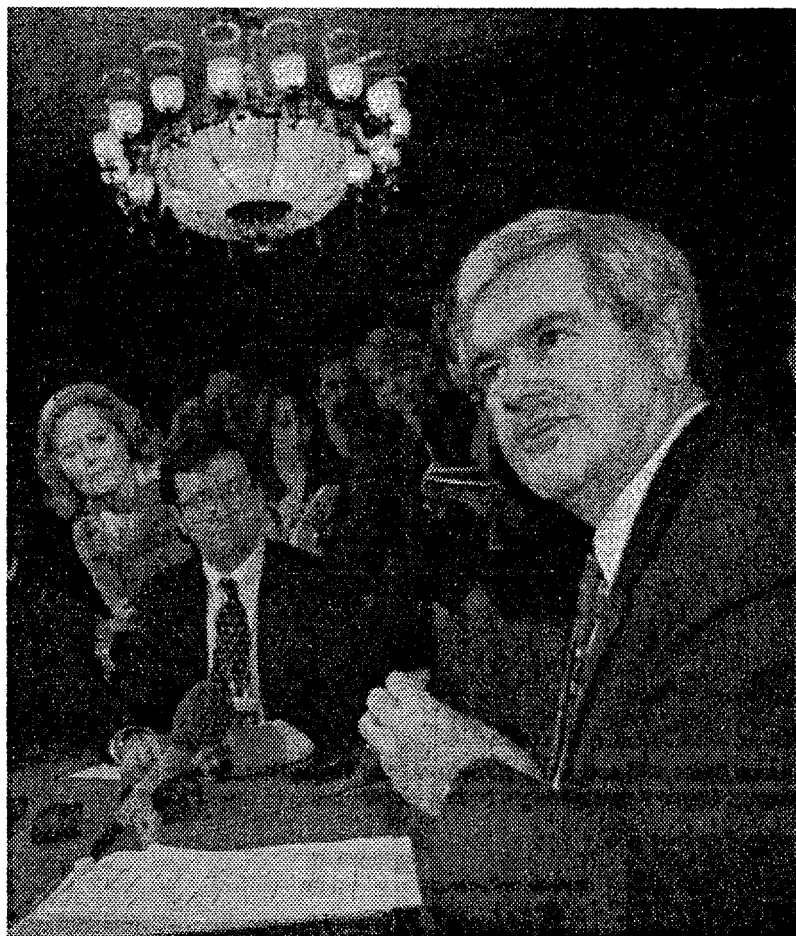
During a private dinner at the Capitol Hill Club, Gingrich told 200 business executives and fellow lawmakers that the establishment press is the "mortal enemy" of reform-minded Republicans. The crowd included chief executive officers and Washington lobbyists representing such companies as Citicorp and Deere & Co.

In a telephone interview yesterday, Gingrich confirmed he had said that corporate executives "need to find alternative methods" of getting their message across because of the presence of "socialists" on many editorial boards.

Asked if he was advocating an advertising boycott, Gingrich said his remarks were directed at editorial pages that have not been supportive of capitalism. He said he was merely explaining that businessmen who advertise "ought to go to the publishers and tell them" that they object to the paper's editorial stance.

Tony Blankley, Gingrich's press secretary, said the speaker has made similar comments in the past. He said Gingrich's message to business executives is that "if they believe in free markets and a newspaper editorializes against free markets, they're under no obligation to advertise. If they think a particular news outlet is not helpful, they're not obliged to continue advertising."

One Gingrich definition of a "so-



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At a news conference, Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) acknowledged that many developments in public schools were not at the hands of Democrats.

cialist" is someone who believes that raising and lowering taxes have no effect on economic conduct, Blankley said. "Certainly there's nothing un-American about being a socialist," he said.

Gingrich's remarks came at a dinner of the John Quincy Adams Society, a group founded by Rep. Amo Houghton (R-N.Y.) to promote contact between Republican lawmakers and corporate executives. Houghton is a former chief executive of Corning Glass Works.

Gregory Favre, editor of the Sacramento Bee and president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, said Gingrich "doesn't have a very good sense of history" because most papers have endorsed Republican presidential candidates over the years. "Those socialist editorial boards aren't doing their job," he said.

Jim Klurfeld, Newsday's editorial page editor, said Gingrich's sugges-

tion "kind of goes against the idea of freedom of the press" but that anyone has the right not to advertise. "I don't think Newt Gingrich wants me to be intimidated for the times I might support him and someone else says they will withdraw their advertising," he said.

Gingrich has repeatedly criticized the news media in recent months, calling journalists "a remarkably isolated group of people who are mostly left wing."

Virtually all newspapers maintain that their content is not influenced by advertising, but boycotts have a way of getting a paper's attention. Last year, 40 car dealers canceled \$200,000 worth of advertising in the San Jose Mercury News to protest an article offering tips on negotiating with dealers. The publisher apologized to the dealers and ran a full-page ad touting the paper's "long-standing partnership" with them.